



PETTING-INDUCED AGGRESSION



A common issue faced by many cat owners is aggressive outbursts during petting. A cat's skin is extremely sensitive and petting can irritate them. Medical issues, stress and oversensitivity can all contribute to petting-induced aggression.

It's important to remember that all cats are individuals and their tolerance for petting can change in response to internal and external factors.

WHAT TO DO

If your cat becomes aggressive in response to petting, know that he's not trying to be mean or behave this way out of spite. He's simply reacting to an unpleasant or even painful sensation in the only way he knows how.

First, ensure that your cat is healthy by having him checked out by your veterinarian. This is particularly important if this is a new or unusual behavior for your cat.

Provide your cat with an enriching environment

with toys, play times, scratch posts, and areas to climb and hide.

Find out where your cat likes to be touched. Hold your hand out and let him direct the petting.

Cats who are becoming overstimulated tend to show certain behaviors that can indicate that petting should stop. Learning to recognize these signs can help prevent aggressive behavior:

- Stiffening of the body
- Rippling the skin
- Twitching the tip of their tail
- Flattening their ears
- Giving a low growl

TRY THIS

Instead of petting your cat all over, try scratching in favored areas, such as the top of the head or chin. You can also pet in short bursts (pet, pet, stop) to allow your cat breaks in between to prevent overstimulation.